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C.I.A. 4.01 Congress for Cultural Freedom

The Liberal Establishment Faces The Blacks The Young The New Left

By WALTER GOODMAN

STEPPING into the limousine that would carry him to Princeton, N. J., where he was to join fourscore other scholars, journalists and men of public affairs in a discussion of "The United States: Its Problems, Impact and Image in the World," a political scientist from abroad had a heavy sense that he was being taken to a funeral. As the limousine embarked upon the New Jersey Turnpike, his gloomy musings developed apace. The host of the meeting at Princeton, after all, was the International Association for Cultural Freedom (I. A. C. F.), offspring of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, done in a couple of years ago by the revelation that it was being supported by the Central Intelligence Agency. The visitor understood, of course, that the ceremonies at Princeton were designed not as rites for the departed rascal, but as an innocent heir's debut into the intellectual world. Obviously—but, such perhaps is the influence of the New Jersey Turnpike, his thoughts kept turning more to decay than to redemption.

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Nothing that would happen in the ensuing four days and nights, early this month, would do much to brighten the visitor's outlook. He and many of his confreres would depart Princeton shaken by the uncertainty they found among the American liberals there assembled, the lack of direction in men to whom democrats around the world had in other years looked for support, encouragement, even a sort of leadership. It was readily understandable—the Presidential campaign and its culmination were enough to sap the richest spirit—but the weariness that permeated the meeting was set off, in a peculiarly troubling way, by the presence of several men in their 20's, a quarter-century below the average age of the company. If they were at all representative of the politically conscious among the present college generation, then the bearers of the international liberal banner could only conclude

Org. 1 International Assoc. for Cultural Freedom

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Fathered in the early years of the cold war by members of the anti-Stalinist left, the Congress for Cultural Freedom attracted such disillusioned ex-Communists as Ignazio Silone, Arthur Koestler and Sidney Hook. In an attempt to rally intellectuals against Soviet ambitions in Europe, the congress sponsored magazines like Encounter, held seminars, and circulated petitions protesting the repression of writers and scholars under assorted dictatorships. After 20 years of such work, when its debt to the C.I.A. was exposed some men who shared the values of the congress, while having known nothing of the C.I.A. involvement, felt that there was something there worth saving. In the fashion of U. S. intellectuals, John Kenneth Galbraith, the late Robert Oppenheimer and others turned to the Ford Foundation, and were received cordially by its president, McGeorge Bundy. From Bundy-Ford, the renovated International Association for Cultural Freedom obtained $1.1-million and a president—Shepherd Stone, who had been director of the Ford Foundation's International Affairs Program for more than a decade. The I.A.C.F. now has affiliates in 10 countries and publishes 18 magazines, on the order of The China Quarterly, a must for China-watchers, and Survey, highly regarded for its coverage of Eastern Europe.

Mr. Stone, who has the look of a U. S. ambassador in an out-of-the-way country, is not unaware of the cloud that shadows his organization. "Since the beginning of 1967," he emphasizes and emphasizes again, "the association has been totally supported by the Ford Foundation. Not a penny has come from any Government source."

THE nature of the Princeton seminar, which cost around $80,000 and exhausted the I.A.C.F. treasury for 1968, was defined as much by persons missing as by those who appeared. The conjecture over drinks was that Melvin Lasky, co-editor of Encounter (now owned by a British publisher), had not been invited because he still bore the C.I.A. taint, and that Sidney Hook was not present because of his reputation for unregenerate anti-Communism. More than one wit inevitably suggested that the real subject of the meeting was: "The I.A.C.F.—Its Image in the World."

Also absent from Princeton University's agreeable Whig Hall, in which the day-long discussions took place, were more leftish or "radical" or merely anti-American elements of America's intellectual spectrum. The sole Cuban to be invited replied that he be goddamned if he'd associate himself with such an association. Evidently sharing his sentiments to some degree were the Nixon and Brezhnev Administrations, neither of which, though solicited, sent along delegates. (Henry A. Kissinger, invited before he was named Presidential Assistant for National Security Affairs, did drop by for dinner, and gave his inadvertent imitation of Peter Sellers doing Dr. Strangelove. He promised that the doors of the White House would henceforward be open to all his old friends. "Aha!" chortled a European journalist. "He's bribing them with jobs.")

The Americans who came to Princeton tended to be of the Kennedy-McCarthy-Kennedy stripe—that is, the famous liberal Establishment—such as Galbraith and Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Carl Kaysen, director of Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study and an aide to Bundy during the days of Camelot. (Bundy himself couldn't make it.) Kaysen served as co-chairman, along with Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, natty author of "The American Challenge."

As the French poet Pierre Emmanuel would lament on the final day, this meeting under the auspices of Cultural Freedom was mainly a gathering of social scientists, and very weak on the arts. Of the two prominent American writers invited, Saul Bellow did not show up, and Lillian Hellman, though attending the meetings loyally, found little to contribute beyond an occasional wisecrack or innocent error. Upon seeing